



# 2000 - Franc note Victor Horta

The 2000-franc note, honouring the architect Victor Horta, is the first of a new series featuring Belgians who have made an impact on 20th century art.

## Security

*The 2 000-franc note is protected by a number of effective security features enabling anyone to check that a note is genuine; examples we areas of raised print, the security thread, the watermark, the*

*optically variable device... At the Printing Works of the National Bank of Belgium quality is meticulously controlled throughout every stage of the production process. This guarantees that*

*every note issued meets in full the required quality standards. Any note which looks different from others or lacks some of the security features should immediately arouse your suspicions.*



Actual measurements : 159 mm x 76 mm



## Ways to identify a genuine banknote

### 1. Exclusive paper



When you pick up a note you can feel the stiffness of the paper and hear the crackle it produces. These qualities help give a preliminary identification of the note.

### 2. Raised (intaglio) print



Several areas on the front (including the portrait) can be perceived by touch. The engraving and the thickness of the ink raise perceptibly the wording and the bar feature. In addition they enable people who are blind or partially-sighted to identify the note by touch.

### 3. Anti-copying features



The green and blue in the design change if the note is copied.

The grey motifs are specially designed to change if reproduced.

#### *4. Optically variable feature*



The figure 2 000 on the back of the note sparkles in the light and looks pink, bronze or green when viewed from different angles.

#### *5. Watermark and thread*



The watermark is of a finely drawn portrait of Victor Horta with his very distinctive initials. Anything which appears dark when the watermark is held to the light, becomes light when the note is placed on an opaque surface.



On the back the security thread looks like a broken silver line. When held to the light it looks black and continuous; the figure "2 000 F" is repeated over its whole length.

#### *6. Printing in register*



The note is printed with great accuracy so that when the chair motif is viewed against a light, the coloured areas on the face fit exactly with those on the back.

### 7. Hidden image



In the rectangle, the figure 2 000 appears when the note is brought up to eye-level and then tilted towards the light. It becomes lighter or darker depending on the way the note faces.

### 8. Micro-lettering



A magnifying glass reveals words in minute lettering on the border of the white band of the watermark, on both sides of the note.

Elsewhere the number 2 000 is in very small figures.

### 9. Under an ultraviolet lamp

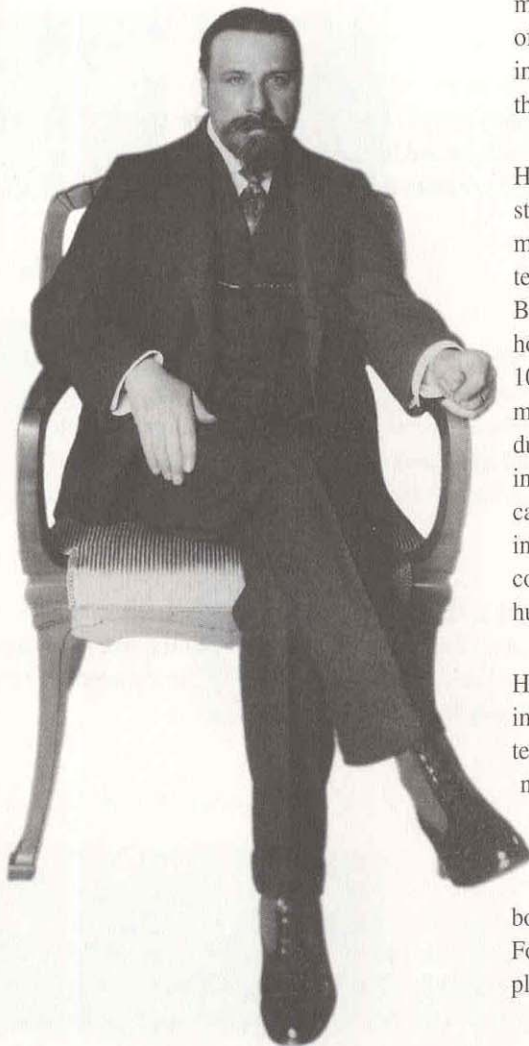


Under ultraviolet rays, some features on the back of the note stand out clearly in blue and green. The security thread is bluish; and red, green and blue fibres appear scattered throughout the paper.





## Victor Horta, master of Art nouveau



Victor Horta is now recognised as a pioneer of modern architecture, an area in which he was one of the prime movers. He was a leading figure in the Art nouveau movement, which spread throughout Europe at the start of the 20th century.

He was born in 1861 in Ghent, where he first studied architecture before going on to the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Brussels. One of his teachers recommended him as a pupil to Alphonse Balat, who was responsible for the royal greenhouses at Laeken, which appear on the back of the 10 000-franc note. A prize-winner for both written material and drawings in several competitions during the 80s, Horta built his first houses in 1885 in his home town. His first major commission came in 1889 for the small neo-classical building in the Parc du Cinquantenaire in Brussels which contains Jef Lambeaux's sculpture "Les passions humaines".

Horta however wanted to break away from the imitation of old styles and to create his own architecture based on the use of materials which were now mass-produced by industry: iron rather than stone structures, glass to allow more light into houses. In the "Hôtel Tassel", built in 1893, he was the first to make extensive use of iron for both the façade and the interior of a town house. For this building, considered to be the first example of Art nouveau architecture in Europe, Horta

developed a new decorative language based on a whiplashline. The architect sought to transpose natural structures and forms in order to achieve complete harmony between the building and its interior decoration. He designed everything himself down to the smallest detail : furniture, mosaics, windows, carpets, fittings...

His bold creations won him the commission for the "Maison du Peuple" (1895-1899). Having become a fashionable architect, Horta was approached by department store heads. The Waucquez warehouse building (1903) now houses the Belgian Centre for Comic Strip Art.

After 1905, Art nouveau became less fashionable with, consequently, fewer private commissions. Horta then turned to public buildings such as the "Musée des Beaux-Arts" in Tournai (1903-1928) and in Brussels, the "Hôpital Brugmann" (1906-1923) and "Palais des Beaux-Arts" (1919-1928). His style became progressively less ornate : wealth of ornamentation gave way to the severity of geometric forms, but his treatment of space retained all its richness.

Created baron in 1932, Victor Horta died in 1947 without living to see the completion of his last work, the "Gare Centrale" in Brussels.

Art nouveau lasted only about twelve years, but we are still fascinated by its refinement and the

remarkable perfection and craftsmanship of its achievements. Horta had a profound influence on creative work of his period, and even today the vitality of his style and the inventiveness and quality of his architecture still impress the best architects throughout the world.



Photo: Bastin-Evrard ©

An architect in his house

*The Horta Museum occupies the house and studio (1898-1901) which the architect built for his own use at 23*

*and 25 rue Américaine in Brussels, in the commune of Saint-Gilles. It retains a large part of its original interior decoration and the furniture designed by the architect. It is open daily, except on Mondays, from 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. Reservations are required for group visits (phone +32/2/537.16.92, fax +32/2/538.76.31).*



## What you should do if...

### *... you have a note withdrawn from circulation ?*

All banknotes issued by the National Bank of Belgium since 1944 can be exchanged at its counters. Go to any of its main branches, which are open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### *... you have a damaged note ?*

This does not often happen; notes return regularly to the National Bank, where they are sorted so that only those in perfect condition are put back into circulation. If despite this your note is damaged (stained, block of notes stuck together...) but still complete and recognisable, the easiest way is to exchange it at a post office or a bank. If it is more seriously damaged (burnt or mutilated) assemble all the pieces carefully and take them to the National Bank. The note will be passed to experts who will check it free of charge and estimate its value. Any deliberate damage is of course illegal.

## If you want to know anything more...

... About the extensive history of the currency or the origin of banknotes, arrange for a free guided tour of the Musée de la Banque Nationale (+32/2/221.22.06) rue du Bois Sauvage 9, 1000 Brussels (near Saint-Michel Cathedral).